ACTIVIST NEWS

A PUBLICATION OF EQUALITY COLORADO

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EQUALITY COLORADO

NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 1997

FORT COLLINS NEARS DECISION

Within a matter of a few months, the Fort Collins City Council will decide on whether to become the sixth Colorado municipality to extend protection from sexual orientation discrimination in housing, employment, and public accommodations. This is all part of a proposed overhaul of the existing city anti-discrimination ordinance. With help from Equality Colorado, a coalition called Fort Collins Citizens for Human Rights has formed to support the inclusion of sexual orientation as a category.

The city's Human Relations Commission first came out with its proposed ordinance changes last year; since then, the City Council asked the City Manager to appoint a task force of community members to look into possible changes to the proposal, and to solicit community response. At this time, the debate rages in the Fort Collins paper. The task force will make a recommendation to the Health and Safety Committee of the City Council, which is expected to make its decision on December 18. From there, the City Council, sometime next year, will decide whether to pass the revised ordinance, defeat it, or refer it to the ballot.

ACTION!

▸ Encourage everyone you know in Fort Collins to become part of Fort Collins Citizens for Human Rights' efforts by:
- attending meetings,
- attending the task force's December 3 community forum on the topic,
- writing letters to the City Council,
- phone banking, or
- speaking publicly.

Call Equality at (303) 839-5540 or email ecjonathan@aol.com for more on how you can help.

Denver Council Hears Needle Exchange Bill

Denverites need to call their City Council reps to ask them to support the Needle Exchange Bill that would allow needle exchange programs to operate legally in the city. They'll be hearing the bill begining Nov. 19. The ultimate legality of the programs is dependent on state law, but this is a crucial piece of making these programs possible. The state bill authorizing needle exchange programs is expected to be reintroduced in the State Legislature next year.

ACTION!

▸ Denver residents call your City Council rep. The main City Council number is (303) 640-3012. Let them know that it's important to proactive on all fronts in attacking the spread of HIV and other diseases.

Legislative House Parties: All the Rage!!!

As the 1998 legislative session approaches, Equality Colorado is encouraging **you** to have a "House Party for Justice." Invite your friends and neighbors over (as well as your local legislators) as a way to learn how to help Equality Colorado achieve our goals for the '98 session: statewide civil rights, a hate crimes bill, and beating back any anti-gay legislation thrown our way! You can also help Equality Lobby raise the money it takes to pay for this crucial work. **Suburbanites are especially encouraged to party!**

ACTION!

▸ Contact Equality Colorado at (303) 839-5540 to tell us when you want to have this house party, and we'll help you get people there, provide the educational speaker, and contact your local legislators.

Lobby Day -- Make Plans NOW!

January 23 (Friday) marks the day of Equality Lobby's second annual Lobby Day at the Capitol. This year, we're combining Lobby Day with our annual Legislative Breakfast. We'll provide more information as it develops.

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BET Teen Summit

NAT'L BLACK LESBIAN & GAY LEADERSHIP FORUM -- On November 8 or 15, Black Entertainment Television's (BET) Teen Summit will air a program which features Angie and Debbie Winans performing their song about homosexuality entitled "It's Not Natural." The song is a part of their crusade to "help emancipate people from the sinful bondage of homosexuality. This program will be viewed by young people around the country and it is important to voice your outrage at such blatant intolerance and insensitivity.

ACTION! Write or call BET and let them know that this affront to gay, lesbian, and bisexual young people is unacceptable. Contact: Rene Turner, Executive Producer, BET, 1899 9th St. NE, Washington, DC 20018, (303) 608-2731, email betinfo@msn.com.

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"Justice. Now." Roundup

Equality Colorado's first annual conference, **"JUSTICE. NOW."** was a great success. Held over the weekend of October 18-19 in Glenwood Springs, we brought together 80+ activists from all parts of the state to network and plan for future organizing efforts. Some of the key ideas that came out of the conference included increasing communication among organizations & activists, having regional meetings and conferences, and working on the 1998 elections by having caucus trainings and participating in candidate forums. We're still thinking about where to have next year's conference -- let us know if you've got any great deals!

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Notes & Updates

Washington Loses: I-677, the Washington State ballot initiative that would have outlawed sexual orientation workplace discrimination, failed on Nov. 4 by a large margin. It lost in all but two counties, including Seattle's King Count.... **Atlanta Partner Policy Upheld:** The Georgia Supreme Court has upheld the City of Atlanta's policy which allows city employees to include aging parents and same- and different-sex partners in their insurance coverage. The court's 5-2 decision came down on November 3... **Federal Workers to get DP coverage?:** Rep. Barney Frank, D-MA, has unveiled a bill that would make domestic partner benefits available to federal employees. The bill would make retirement benefits, life insurance, health insurance, and workers' compensation available to both same-sex and different-sex partners of federal workers... **Robert Acremant Gets Death Penalty:** The man who was convicted of killing two lesbians, Roxanne Ellis and Michelle Abdill, in 1995 in Oregon, was given the death penalty.

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CLIP Job Opening

The Colorado Legal Initiatives Project (CLIP), a non-profit legal organization specializing in GLBT civil rights legislation and related public education is seeking an office administrator/bookkeeper. Responsibilities include bookkeeping, banking, database management, purchasing, and working with Board, staff, and volunteers. Successful candidate will be highly computer literate, and familiar with computerized accounting systems such as QuickBooks and Excel. Non-profit administrative experience a plus. Mail resume to CLIP, PO Box 300397, Denver, CO 80203, or fax to (303) 830-0343.

EQUALITY CALENDAR

November 1997

30; DEC. 1-2 • NAMES QUILT SHOWING IN DENVER
Location: Auraria Campus, Tivoli Student Union, Turnhalle Room 250, 900 Auraria Parkway, Denver. Call (303) 312-0811 or visit www.mscd.edu/health for details of all three days' events.

December 1997

1 • WORD AIDS DAY BENEFIT CONCERT 8:00 p.m. at Montview Blvd. Presbyterian Church, 1980 Dahlia St., Denver. Featuring The Colorado Quilt Chorus, Paula Westerfield, and emcee Dottie Lamm. Tickets are $15-$100, call (303) 355-9941.

January 1998

18 • PUBLIC FORUM ON RACISM sponsored by Equality CO and local GLBT media. For more info, contact Equality.

23 • LOBBY DAY AND LEGISLATIVE BREAKFAST at the State Capitol building in Denver.

24-31 • 21ST ANNUAL ASPEN SKI WEEK Call (970) 925-9249, check out www.gayskiweek.com or email aspengay@rof.net for more.

February 1998

1 • EQUALITY DAY AT THE XPLOSION! Join us as the Colorado Xplosion women's basketball team takes on the New England Blizzard at 5:00 p.m. at Denver's McNichol's Arena. Tickets are $13, with a portion of ticket sales going to benefit Equality Colorado. Call (303) 839-5540 for more.